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1975/04/27

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SAIGON 0752 FLASH

DELIVER IMMEDIATELY

APRIL 27, 1975

TO: HENRY A. KISSINGER

FROM: AMBASSADOR GRAHAM MARTIN

REF: SAIGON 0747

1. Tran Van Lam decided the stakes were too high to play any games. He helped to round up the Assembly a little ahead of time and while they were waiting for a quorum to assemble, they received a starkly, realistic military briefing from Minister of Defense Tran Van Don, Chairman of the JGS, General Cao Van Vien, and Lt. Gen. Minh, head of the Capital Military District. A quorum is 106. They finally adopted a question which asked which of the Deputies and Senators agree that the President of the Republic of Viet-Nam transfer all the powers of the President of the Republic of Viet-Nam to General Duong Van Minh in order to carry out the task of seeking ways and means to restore peace in South Viet-Nam. The vote was 134 out of the 136 present. The two non-voting members were the President of the Senate and the President of the Lower House. The vote was, therefore, unanimous.

2. Tran Van Lam thereupon has sent a letter to President Huong, a quick translation of which reads as follows:

AMB:GMartin:ek
4/27/75.

~~SECRET~~/SENSITIVE

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4.
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By KBH NARA, Date 2/1/95

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"I have the honor to inform the President that, in accord with the request of the President, the National Assembly of the Republic of Viet-Nam agrees that all powers of the President of the Republic of Viet-Nam be transferred to General Duong Van Minh in order to carry out the task of seeking ways and means to restore peace in South Viet-Nam."

3. Tran Van Lam informs us that he had previously coordinated with both General Minh and President Huong. Both have accepted the result. Both have agreed, according to Lam, that the transfer ceremony will take place tomorrow in a setting similar to that employed by Thieu last Monday night. While Lam would like the ceremony to be conducted in the morning, it is quite probable that Huong will set it for the afternoon, thereby completing a full week as President.

4. The French, the Poles, the Hungarians have all passed the word to the other side. Tran Van Lam has arranged to have the result of the Assembly action broadly disseminated through radio and TV with the hope that the other side now decides that further military pressure on Saigon will not be necessary.

5. It is quite probable that moves to complete the interdiction of the roads may continue and it may be also possible a few more

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rockets will be launched this evening. It is the unanimous opinion of the senior personnel here that there will be no direct or serious attack on Saigon.

6. I have talked with Admiral Gayler. He was placing his forces on one hour alert, a necessary and welcome precaution. He seems to be considerably concerned over a message which was transmitted in the clear calling for artillery fire on Tan Son Nhut during the night. Experienced communications analysts here conclude that "since for the past 15 years, no such messages have been transmitted in the clear, that this is a part of a pressure operation." It was, in fact, used by Tran Van Don in his briefing of the Assembly.

7. We will, therefore, continue with the air operation during the evening. As of noon, we will have evacuated 35,245 people. By morning, this should have reached close to 40,000.

8. I have just been informed that Minh will make a policy speech on the occasion of the transfer of power at the Palace and we will hope to get a copy before the actual delivery.

9. I hope you can keep your colleagues tied down another 48 hours. After Minh's speech, we will be better able to judge what the near and short range future may bring.

9. With the warmest regards.

MARTIN

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